

# Proposed Amendment to the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility Record of Decision

U.S. Department of Energy - Washington State Department of Ecology - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Washington State Department of Ecology and the U.S. Department of Energy (Tri-Party agencies) requests input on the *Proposed Plan for an Amendment to the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility (ERDF) Record of Decision*, DOE/RL-2006-48. The purpose of the Record of Decision (ROD) amendment is to accommodate the disposal of Hanford-only waste material typically stored in containers at the facility or disposed of in unlined trenches to be disposed of at ERDF

## Background

ERDF began operation in 1996. The facility, which is located in the center of the Hanford Site, currently comprises of six areas, or cells. Each cell is 500 feet square and 70 feet deep and constructed with a multiple barrier liner system to provide an impermeable layer of protection. Each pair of cells is large enough to hold 2.8 million tons of waste material.

Since operations began in 1996, more than 6.4 million tons of Hanford cleanup wastes have been disposed at ERDF. Most of these wastes have come from waste sites and burial grounds associated with the former plutonium production facilities in the 100, 200 and 300 areas. Additional wastes are generated routinely from other Hanford activities not identified within any specific cleanup action. Modification of the ROD would allow disposal at ERDF of these additional wastes.

On January 20, 1995, the Tri-Party agencies signed the ERDF ROD. An Explanation of Significant Difference (ESD) was issued in 1996. An ESD is a post-ROD change to the cleanup remedy that does not fundamentally alter the overall cleanup approach. The ROD has been amended three times. The ROD as it exists, provides



the overall plan for construction, operation and expansion of the facility, as well as disposal of specific Hanford wastes, primarily from the cleanup of areas along the Columbia River.

However, additional wastes are generated routinely from other Hanford activities not identified within any specific cleanup action. Those wastes are currently stored in containers, left in the facility, or disposed of in unlined trenches. Modification of the ROD would allow disposal at ERDF of the wastes, which include those from surveillance and maintenance of Hanford facilities, environmental research and development activities, sample analyses, liquid effluent waste treatment, waste storage and existing waste inventory, infrastructure support, and environmental monitoring programs.

## Public Comment

The Tri-Party agencies want your feedback on the proposed amendment to the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility Record of Decision.

The public comment period is  
**August 28 - September 26, 2006.**

## What is a Record of Decision?

A ROD is the formal document in which a regulatory agency sets forth the selected remedial measure and the reasons for its selection. The proposed amendment to the ERDF ROD is intended to allow the disposal of some Hanford-generated wastes not covered under existing agreements.

## What alternatives were evaluated?

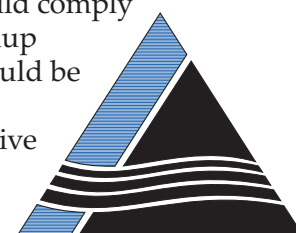
Two alternatives were evaluated: no action and the preferred alternative. The no-action alternative consists of continued onsite storage of wastes without disposal. Continued storage would pose a threat of release to the environment.

The preferred alternative would authorize the disposal of specific Hanford-only waste for treatment and/or disposal at ERDF that are not covered in other existing Hanford agreements. The preferred alternative also would likely increase efficiency and reduce costs of disposal at ERDF.

## Why was the preferred alternative selected?

The preferred alternative was selected because the similarity of contaminants and waste types from Hanford operations not included in the ROD has made it apparent that ERDF disposal is an option that should be available for this type of waste. In addition to identified wastes, the preferred alternative contains a provision that would allow for the disposal of additional Hanford-only generated waste that meet certain criteria. This process is known as the plug-in approach and is intended to promote cleanup activities, provide secure and safe waste disposal, and save time and money.

Based on available information, the Tri-Party agencies believe the preferred alternative would protect public health and the environment, would comply with applicable or relevant cleanup standards and requirements, would be cost effective, and would use permanent solutions and alternative treatment technologies to the maximum extent practicable.



*Tri-Party Agreement*

## How you can become involved

A 30-day public comment period on the proposed amendment to the ERDF ROD is August 28 - September 26, 2006. The Tri-Party agencies would like your comments on this document and will consider all comments before finalizing it. **Please submit your comments to:**



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To request the Tri-Party agencies to arrange a public meeting in your area on the amendment to the ERDF ROD, please contact David Einan, above, on or before September 6, 2006, or the Hanford Cleanup Line at (800) 321-2008.

The document is also available for review at the Public Information Repositories listed below.

## Hanford Public Information Repository Locations

### Portland

Portland State University  
Branford Price and Millar Library  
934 SW Harrison  
Attn: Judy Andrews (503) 725-4126

### Seattle

University of Washington  
Suzzallo Library  
Government Publications Division  
Attn: Eleanor Chase (206) 543-4664

### Richland

U.S. Department of Energy Public Reading Room  
Washington State University, Tri-Cities  
Consolidated Information Center, Room 101-L  
2770 University Drive  
Attn: Janice Parthree (509) 372-7443

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Gonzaga University  
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**Information Repository web site address: <http://www2.hanford.gov/arpir/>**

This document can be viewed online at <http://www.hanford.gov/public/calendar>  
(under the Public Comment Period section)

## FACT SHEET

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